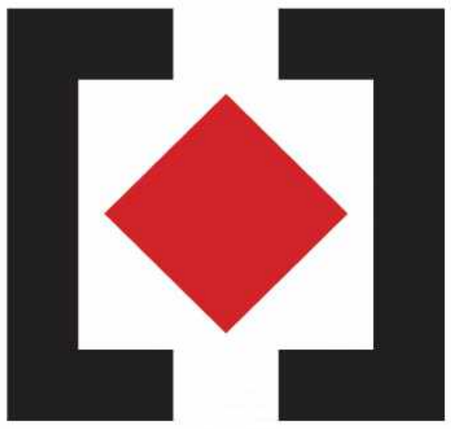
MARVEL 003

SINS OF SINISTER [part_] [_VIII]

GILLEN
VITTI
BEREDO

IMMORAL X-MEN

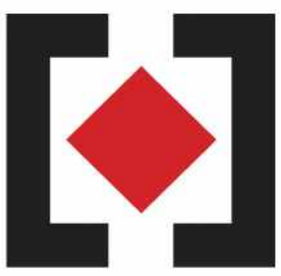


[sin...[0.8]...]
[ister[0.8]....]

If this is the best of possible worlds,
what then are the others?

-- *CANDIDE*,
VOLTAIRE

[sin...[0.8]...]
[ister[0.8]....]



[sin...[0.8]...]
[ister[0.8]....]

[Essex_Alpha]

Psychic log: The mission continues.

I must be made of steel-- emotionally as well as physically.

I fear my creator is close to breaking. We have chased leads for lifetimes and are no closer.

I still believe that we can save this universe. We follow leads until we or they run out.

The latest takes us to 537-2389. A clue is in one of the minds on an Exodus Prayerworld, a long forgotten psalm we must decode.

Clearly, this is an away mission of almost impossible peril.

Even if any of the crew still lived, I wouldn't risk them.

We hope my telepathy will be able to shield me...

It does. I shouldn't be surprised. I'm relieved but surprised.

Why wouldn't it shield me?

There hasn't been real *progress* in the last nine hundred years.

There's merely been an increase in scale.

Rasputin! Move! We can't stay here for long.

If *any* Exodus realizes I'm still alive, it will be bad for everyone. And especially me.

Sinister cannot even control voicing his own fears. I do not blame him. This universe is horror.

Could even his peerless intellect have guessed it would become so bad?

The wars are powered by atrocities, and the Prayer-worlds are a common one...

Where did these clones come from? Grown for the purpose? Captives of war? It doesn't matter.

Every one of them has their brain trapped in an infinite loop, chanting jubilations to the Exodus.

Endless screams of rapture echo across this continent.

I search for the one whose prayer holds a secret. It is like looking for a needle in a haystack.

That's all the last nine hundred years have been.

I rifle through minds, trying to steal secrets from beneath the eyes of a sleeping god, a steroidal giant, deformed by mutant faith.

I search and...

...I find it.

I say a prayer of thanks.

I suspect that was a mistake.

Who trespasses?

I think I've got it!

Prepare for evac, sir.

I'm aboard, sir!

Go!

Oh, to hell with it. He's after us.

No other option...

Message to Prayerworld 534-2386! We're orbiting Prayerworld designation 537-2389.

Its Exodus has been launched.

It's a high-risk tactic, but it's all we have.

Little beings: You disturb my contemplation.

Your feet dirty the perfection of a holy world. Why do you--?

What?

Since the Exodus schism, individual sects have established their own claims, each with Prayerworlds and Exodus clones pointing across the void at one another.

Many have cease-fire scriptures.

The launching of an Exodus is against them.

Nearby sects will have to respond, in case their neighbors are unleashing a first-strike crusade.

They'll launch *their* Exodus...

And then?

Heretic.

Heretic.

An Exodus will do what an Exodus will do.

Mutually assured destruction.

It's a classic. Let's go.

The whole solar system is scoured.

War will ignite between these Exodus sects and spread. The body count will be unimaginable.

I would be horrified, but I'm hardened to it. The body count was already unimaginable hundreds of years ago.

We are in a universe where planets made of corpses orbit dead stars.

The only hope is absolute transformation. Sinister's promised Krakoa of peace and plenty, of beaches and soft sand.

The only hope is that we succeed.

We're clear. The message--have you decoded it?

What does it say?

I have. It's some space-time locations and a phrase.

It's written in classical English. *Hmm...*

"We should be on the same side."

THERE IS ONLY ~~WAR~~ ME.

[MISTER SINISTER]

[RASPUTIN IV]

[EMMA FROST]

One thousand years have passed since Mister Sinister gained control over mutantkind by using clones of Moira MacTaggert clones as “save points” and embedding his own DNA into the resurrection process, beginning with the members of the Quiet Council -- and subsequently lost control over the timeline when his Moira-engine was stolen -- stranding him in a hell of his own making.

Unfortunately, his own ambitions proved to be his downfall as the Sinisterized versions of the Quiet Council began vying for power -- even going so far as to betray one another the moment the individual had no more perceived use -- as was the case with the original Sinister. Together, along with his most recent and successful Chimera experiment, Rasputin IV, Sinsiter was able to commandeer a ship and escape the Quiet Council’s clutches. But now Sinister and Rasputin IV stand alone in a universe at war with itself.

Their only shot at making it out alive is to get their hands on the Moira-engine and reset the timeline -- but they’re not the only ones seeking it out.

SINS OF SINISTER

YEAR 1000

IMMORAL X-MEN

PART 8 : “OUR NINE-HUNDRED-YEARS-AND-COUNTING MISSION”

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Stan Lee & **Jack Kirby**

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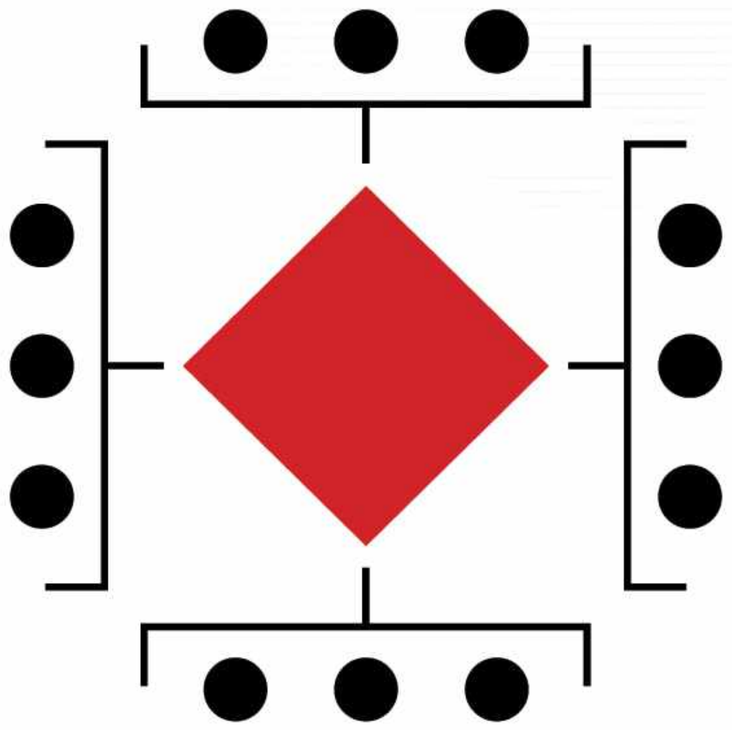
[Sinister.....[+1000]
[subj...Quiet_Council]

THE FATE OF THE QUIET COUNCIL IN THE THIRD MILLENNIUM



- PROFESSOR XAVIER: Protectorate of the Dream.
- NIGHTCRAWLER: Dead. Gene line utilized, notably in the apostate cult, the Legion of the Night.
- COLOSSUS: Bulwark of materialism. All Superpowers To The Space Soviets.
- SINISTER: Disappeared nine hundred years ago with the experimental *Marauder*. Wanted, if mostly forgotten, criminal.
- EMMA FROST: Empress of the Red Diamond.
- KATE PRYDE: Hellfire Exile, Pirate Queen of the Void.
- EXODUS: The Gene-Reformation led to the division of the one true Exodus church into thousands of heretical subsects.
- HOPE: Dissected into still-living reliquaries and distributed among the Exodus sects.
- NAMOR: Imperator of the Drowned Worlds. Sire of the Knight Consorts.
- BEAST: Gene-chained Court Scientist of the Red Diamond.
- MAGIK: Retreated to the Limbic Incursion after losing the seventh diamond war.
- SEBASTIAN SHAWS: Ruling majority in the Screaming Council of Hell.

There are at least a million Sinister-derived gene polities, large and small.

The total mutant population of the galaxy is unimaginable.

Any traces of their enemies are residual smears on the tube of an experiment that has long since gone mad.

Mutants are undisputed rulers of the galaxy.

Yet, somehow, hate and fear remain.

[Sinister..[+1000]
[Fear_All_Mutants]

The journey isn't easy. Nothing has been easy for a thousand years.

The biggest detour was around the Limbic Incursion's tear across the galaxy, Magik's wound in space-time to try to bring Limbo into reality.

The Materialist Colossus' citadels watch the borders with cold, iron eyes. Thankfully, they miss us.

We're forced to pass through a war front between the Dream and a Red Diamond fleet.

I'm close enough to touch the smug, dead peace of the Protectorate's thoughts.

Their bodies are ravaged and their minds are in a paradise, lotus eaters being consumed by a war machine.

In time, I will save them. I have to.

Later, we're stalked by one of the Pryde's packs, chasing us through asteroids, phasing through our few remaining Proteus torpedoes.

We know they'll tear our ship and us for parts and leave our bodies mid-rock as a warning and a boast.

Sinister tells me that once, Pryde was one of the kindest on the council. I find it hard to believe.

But, I suppose, all things are relative.

Eventually, we reach the coordinates...

...and find something old. Older than us.

To reach here, this would have left Earth...about when we did. Earlier, even.

Retrieve it.

I don't bother suiting up before jumping through the stepping-porter.

A little trip like this is barely worth it.

I find the clue...

...but I have no idea what it means.

What *is* it?

Old technology. Very old. I used to use it...before.

Before everything. Before I was even me.

She's showing off. She's...

What *is* she doing?

I knew better than to ask who "she" was. I could see the impact on him. I believe my later actions were out of worry. Initially.

You seem unsettled, sir.

I am. I like this not one bit.

If it's a message from an old friend, I should hear it alone.

I'll be in my quarters. Don't disturb me.

Oh, Irene, giving me a little craft project to assemble a suitable machine before I can actually listen? How like you.

As in, *annoying.*

KLLK

Hello, Nathaniel.

Hello, Irene.

I stole your lab with Storm, Stellaris and the Arakkii. If you're listening to this, they'll have hid it again, when I tried to reset the universe.

This will be because Raven is dead. And if Raven is dead...

...Oh god, I hate myself. She would hate me for this. I...

Nathaniel: If you get back to your Moiras and you return to the past, come to me.

I will join you.

Yes, I've fought you. I didn't trust you with your plans...and I also know it is impossible for you to trust anyone...but you ***must*** try now.

I am trying to find a way to save Mystique. I see the future and there is only death for her. It's horrible.

To see the woman you love torn asunder so many times. I... I know you can't understand.

Correct.

Your nightmare dimension was the longest path of her life, so I followed it. She beat the odds so many times, and I tried to be hopeful.

No world is truly a hell with her in it.

Now, if she is gone again, we must try again... and perhaps I can discern another route alongside yours.

I wanted us to be on the same side for many reasons, and I still not dare say them all out loud.

But to save Mystique, I would join you, as you and your Moiras are the only way back to her.

Do not doubt me. When you became the monster you are, you cut love from your heart...but remember the power of grief that led you to do it in the first place.

Dissolve this cylinder. Inside it are the instructions that will let you find your Moiras.

Well, thank you, Irene. I'll consider your offer.

I'll probably reject it, but it's only polite to--

One more thing: I know your eventual goal is to transcend time and space to become a Dominion.

You do not succeed.

I know you'll think I'm trying to trick you, but this is your only hope, Nathaniel.

Give up.

Sir...

...you're not trying to save the universe, are you?

I'm afraid not, Rasputin.

Oh.

I don't think you get to live.

That would be fair, wouldn't it?

But look at the universe...

...does *any of this* look fair?

Anti-phase phasers?

Sir. I'm insulted.

Even with your best tech, you can't beat me in a fight.

You made that so.

Of course I can't. I gave you the finest stable gene cocktail I could.

Telepathy. Steel body. Intangibility. Force-fields. A healing factor.

I didn't even put my usual self-destruct in, as that's a weakness others could utilize.

I even gave you free will.

I gave you *all* these gifts...

KLLK

...but not flight.
A shame. She was excellent work.
My finest.
Perhaps when I get home, I'll cook up another.
But first...

"...we have Irene's dance steps to follow."

Ah, Machine. Take notes...

Sol.

The Kenji Uedo clone's growth continues. He appears to be digesting Saturn and Jupiter.

Hmm. I think I can see the beginning of tendrils blindly reaching out toward Alpha Centauri, like lovers in the night...

Earth.

Yes, yes, yes.

Were I to choose a place to hide, this is the sort of place I'd choose.

Even in a hell universe, who would look *here?*

A planet that is little more than a ball of cancer cells.

Doom.

Only Doom.

Errrrror-rr-rr-oom.

Still Doom.

Doom.

Sorry, old chap.

I genuinely am.

You've changed.

I have, a little. Did a few tweaks. Pop culture references don't really work when there hasn't been pop culture for nearly a millennium.

So...hiding here, so desperate to live you can hang on even when the universe has gone to ◆◆◆◆...

...what if I said I had a way back to a life you could *love* and not merely endure?

I say I'd follow you to the edge of the universe.

That's lucky, Moira.

That's where we're going.

Court of the Red Diamond.

You have done well, Knight-Consort-7...

...and now you receive my highest blessing.

Whoever kisses the hand of the living gem of Cyttorak shall become an unstoppable Juggernaut!

Protect *my* children.

Destroy all those who are not.

First...where is that latest Xavier star? How can we have lost a moon-sized blob of gray matter?

I wish to thrust a stiletto heel through that heaving mass of hypocrisy.

Oh most merciful, benevolent and ever-beautiful Queen...

...an old project has paid dividends...

...I compromised various A.I. systems and left them out in the universe. Remember Orchis from those early days? No longer a threat, but compromised rebel eyes are useful.

I left them looking for certain missing troublesome, absent beings. And the remaining Doombot has found one.

Nathaniel's not dead.

Surely not, Beast? Not after all these years... ***Sinister?***

How is our creator keeping himself busy in his dotage?

He recruited the mechanical revenant of Moira MacTaggert.

He needed her psychic imprint to locate something.

Moira clones.

Oh, hell. In our earliest years, when I boasted of Shaw's first enchantment of my diamond form, Sinister's ego got the best of him.

He implied he had a high card he'd lost beneath the table. But... this?

He can burn down all reality. When I've nearly ***won?***

I will lead our schools personally. My students go to war.

Prepare my largest legions and my highest heels! They must be ***crushed.***

We have to save our galaxy for the children--

"--after him!"

One Doom.

Only Doom.

Only Doom.

You'd have thought he'd be happy that cursed Richards is long dead.

Well, it turns out getting what you want doesn't actually make you happy.

I still can't believe it. You cloned me *and* kept it secret?

Of course I did, and of course I did.

You'd only have been miffed, and when you get miffed, you get terribly punchy...

Right-- here we are...

The World Farm.

Oh. Fancy.

Now--

KRAKOOM

"Looks like we've got survivors moving. Good..."

...it's always harder to interrogate a corpse.

You three... you've got a choice. Tell us everything about the Red Diamond armada that's behind you, and you get a cell. Otherwise...

...you get fed to my friend here.

Wait--has Frost really run out of quality scouts?

A straight Sinister clone and a couple of robots?

Storm's old attack dog Jon Ironfire, now with an ***actual*** attack dog. Fantastic...

Jon, listen. Frost has picked up our trail somehow. I'm not with ***her.*** I'm with ***me.*** I'm ***the*** Sinister.

If we've been followed, it's even worse. The castle can't fall into her hands.

It can't. Even the Empire of the Red Diamond has to break against us.

We've taken everything this universe has thrown our way for the last nine hundred years. We'll find a way to take her.

The goddess said that if the citadel falls, the universe does with it.

The goddess is right...but I may have a little additional information you'll be interested in.

Trust me. Together, we can save the universe.

Psychic log: "Save the universe"? Save it for ***him...***

The mission is over. The mission was a lie.

I was the fool he made me to be.

My body can survive space. I have air in my veins. I can slow my metabolism. I will live a little longer... but for what?

Just to keep my hate alive a few more days.

Oh, hello, dear. You seem to have gotten yourself into a pickle!

Who are you? What do you want?

Oh, in this game, I ask the questions.

You have been played poorly, my sweet thing. The man who did you dirty is running here and there, free and all naughty.

I *should* ask you what you most regret, but it's written all over your shiny face...

You regret trusting *him.*

Do you want revenge?

More than anything.

Good, good. Then the real question is...

...do you want to make a deal?

[08_sins_of___X]
[08_sinister__X]

SINS OF SINISTER

CHECKLIST

YEAR 10

SINS OF SINISTER #1

STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUTANTS #1

NIGHTCRAWLERS #1

IMMORAL X-MEN #1

YEAR 100

NIGHTCRAWLERS #2

IMMORAL X-MEN #2

STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUTANTS #2

IMMORAL X-MEN #3

YEAR 1000

STORM & THE BROTHERHOOD OF MUTANTS #3

NIGHTCRAWLERS #3

SINS OF SINISTER: DOMINION #1

[08_sins_of___X]
[08_sinister__X]

ZONE